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CHRISTIANITY'S GREAT TRIUMPH

AND HER REPULSE

BY CLERUS.

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TORONTO :
WILLIAM BRIGGS,

WESLEY BUILDINGS.

MONTREAL : C. W. COATES.

HALIFAX : S. F. HUESTIS.

1898



PREFACE.

“Go YE therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” Such are the words that Christ spoke to the Church when He was about to withdraw His visible presence and to return unto the Father. The verse is commonly spoken of as the “Great Commission”;

but we do not always bear in mind its terms :
“Make disciples of all the nations”—*πάντα τὰ
ἔθνη*—*the heathen*. He had already, on the
evening of His resurrection, walked *incognito* as
far as Emmaus, with two of His disciples, and
in His conversation with them had perceived
that they had not understood the significance of
His death, which had taken place three days
before ; and that they were even now in dark-
ness, which had only been made more perplexing
still by certain rumors that their Lord had risen
and appeared to some of their fellow disciples.
Then He opened their mind, that they might
understand the Scriptures. “And He said unto
them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should
suffer, and rise again from the dead the third
day ; and that repentance and remission of sins
should be preached in His name unto all the

nations"—*πάντα τὰ ἔθνη*—"beginning from Jerusalem."

The term "all the nations" means those peoples that have not a knowledge of the true God, and is used as a kind of antithesis to the term Israel, or the Jews. The aim that, from the first announcement of the commission, was set before the Church was the Christianization of the heathen. The Church might begin *from Jerusalem*; but her goal must be the uttermost parts of the earth.

Yet after 1900 years of Christian history, the Church is able to say little more than that she has skirted the shores of heathendom—has, perhaps, here and there caused a ray of light to pierce the darkness. As the dawn of the twentieth century is painting the hill-tops with its glory, she is able to say that of a total popu-

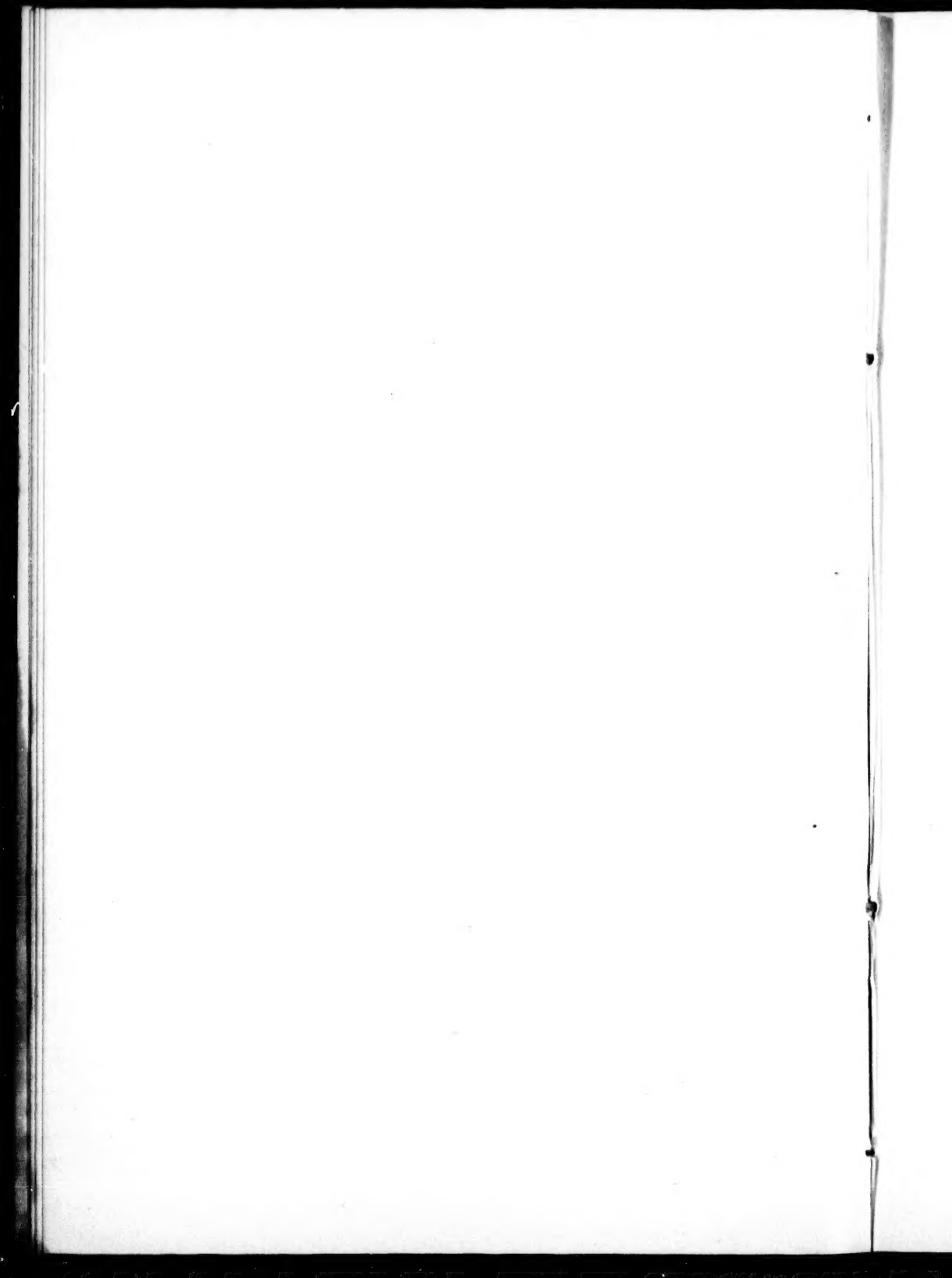
lation of the world of some 1,400,000,000 there remain still 1,000,000,000 to whom she has not yet carried the Gospel, who are still sitting in *the darkness of the shadow of death.*

When will their evangelization be effected?

CLERUS.

OCTOBER, 1898.

PART I.



CHRISTIANITY'S GREAT TRIUMPH AND HER REPULSE.

I.

OF the grandeur and magnificence of that civilization which grew up in ancient times on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, it is impossible to give an adequate description. But from its western limits, where the Straits of Gibraltar opened a gateway to the wide and mysterious Atlantic, to its easternmost point, where its blue waters washed the shores of that land once trodden by the Saviour's feet, its borders were lined with cities, towns and villages all the way.

Of these, some of the cities still remain, showing traces of their ancient magnificence; while others lie buried in ruins, from which *savants*

dig up specimens of ancient skill in sculpture, architecture and art that surpass the most skillful productions of modern times.

On these shores was Rome, seated on her seven hills, upon whose summits and in whose valleys the white pillars of marble palaces glinted through the groves in the mellow sunlight of Italian skies. Her streets were lined with the mercantile houses of her merchant-princes. Her suburbs were filled with the mansions of the nobles and the wealthy; while her wharves were thronged with vessels laden with grain from Alexandria in Egypt, with spices and gold, with costly silks and pearls of India and other lands afar. Down her streets the legions of her mighty armies marched with thunderous tread to the conquest of the world. On her public buildings—the Colosseum, the theatres, the imperial palaces—the skill of architecture and art had been lavished to make them the admiration of all nations.

There was Corinth, whose isthmus was washed on both sides by the waters of the sea. At her ports the costly luxuries of all nations were

unloaded. In her splendid palaces of marble, made brilliant with purple and gold, pleasure reigned supreme; while her merchants were known in all lands for their enterprise and wealth. In her suburbs on the isthmus, the world's games were celebrated; when thousands who sought pleasure or distinction in the games, or who sought the opportunity of reciting their literary productions to the assembled multitudes, found their way within her walls.

There was Athens, the world's university, to which the best men of all lands turned their steps to hear or to tell the newest discoveries in science, philosophy or art. On her Acropolis sat the court of Areopagus, the most august tribunal of the nation; within her walls Demosthenes had thrilled assembled thousands with his eloquence; within her precincts was the grove,

“Plato's retirement where the Attic bird

Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long.

Across the *Ægean*, on the coast of Asia Minor, stood mighty Ephesus, whose temple to the god-

dess Diana, burned on the night that Alexander the Great was born, but rebuilt at the expense of the nation with the aid of the ladies, who contributed their golden jewellery and ornaments, was one of the seven wonders of the world. Within the walls of the temple not only was the august worship of the goddess celebrated, but there too were stored the riches of the wealthy men of all nations, for it was the Bank of England of those days.

There on Syrian Orontes lay Antioch, whose eastern gates welcomed the wealth of Asia and whose western gates sent it forth over the Mediterranean to every land; whose long streets—some of them four miles long—were lined with marble colonnades, under which the busy multitudes could walk untouched by the blazing sun. Thither came the wealthy of every land seeking health or pleasure, while their life passed on as one long summer day. In its suburbs was the beautiful grove of Daphne, described by General Lew Wallace in his book "*Ben-Hur*."

Away to the south, in Egypt, lay Alexandria, founded by Alexander the Great, to provide an

entrepôt for the commerce of India, Persia and Araby the blest, borne over the Indian Ocean to Egypt and transhipped to Alexandria, whence it could be distributed to the nations of the world.

To the westward again lay Cyrene, whose magnificent ruins yet remain to bear witness to its former greatness. Westward still farther was that Carthage which Augustus had built to replace the more ancient city of the same name.

II.

IN the countries of which these cities were either the capitals or the chief ornaments, were found illustrations of principles of government, of philosophy, of jurisprudence, of military science, that remain unshaken to this present time and that perhaps will never pass away.

Rome showed to all time those principles of government that enabled her to maintain it for herself unshaken, even when its outward form changed from monarchy with kings to a democracy with consuls and tribunes, and back again to monarchy with emperors. Her *form* of government might change, but her government

itself was never shaken. And when she ruled her colonies by deputies, in many different arenas she found opportunity to work out those principles to the production of strong and stable governments for the people. The governors might be dishonest and vicious, but the government itself was not vicious.

Underneath the governments of to-day, whether monarchical, democratic, or despotic, lie many of the same principles that had their exemplification in the Empire of Rome.

Her jurisprudence is the jurisprudence of the courts of the British Empire, and, indeed, of all the civilized nations of to-day. Her science of war that secured the adhesion of many of the greatest generals the world has ever known, is largely that of the generals of the present time, in those countries where the destructive science of war is made a study.

In Greece, philosophy and architecture and art found their congenial home. The productions of her architects, even though many of those productions are found as ruins only, are studied by the architects of to-day; while her

Doric, Ionic and Corinthian orders of architecture appear in many of the noblest structures that adorn the cities of our time.

Her philosophers—Socrates and Plato and Aristotle—still sit in the master's seat, and are still recognized as holding in many respects undisputed sway over men's thinking and philosophizing; and, perhaps, there is no country of modern times that can count among its people such a long list of philosophers as that small and rocky land of Greece.

But in art, especially in sculpture, she sat as queen; and no sculptor of to-day can be said to have received adequate training without having studied the works of Phidias and Praxiteles,—the statues, the friezes, the columns that adorned the palaces and temples of her cities.

III.

THIS magnificent civilization had its systems of religion; for religion belonged to the nation, not to the world, and its systems were almost as numerous as the nations.

In Rome it was marked by great splendour

and magnificence in all its rites and ceremonies. Of the place it held in the country, we may form some idea from what Gibbon says ("Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," chapter xxviii.—*State Paganism at Rome*), in reference to the priests: "Their robes of purple, chariots of state, and sumptuous entertainments, attracted the admiration of the people, and they received from the consecrated lands and the public revenue an ample stipend, which liberally supported the splendours of the priesthood and all the expenses of the religious worship of the State. As the service of the altar was not incompatible with the command of armies, the Romans, after their consulships and triumphs, aspired to the place of Pontiff or of Augur. The seats of Cicero and of Pompey were filled, in the fourth century, by the most illustrious members of the senate." So intimately was religion connected with the life of the country, that no affair of importance, either of war, of diplomacy or of public policy at home, was undertaken without its sanction sought in the most solemn and public way. No less intimately associated with the personal and

home life of the people, it had its Lares and Penates, around which the most sacred associations of home often gathered.

In Greece it entered, if possible, even more intimately into the public and private life of the nation. Every hill and valley was associated with the name of some god, while the cities were crowded—the porticos, the housetops, the markets, the squares, the temples, the streets—with gods, many of whose statues were the productions of sculptors whose names the world will never let die. Religious rites were performed in the home by the master of the house, supplying the place of family worship of to-day in Christian lands. In the temples, on public occasions of importance, special sacrifices were offered and prayers were said to secure the blessing of the deities upon great undertakings either at home or abroad; but regular services were maintained by the priests at stated times, and most temples were always open to devout worshippers. Of the intimacy of the association of religion with the people's national life, we may form an idea from the fact that

Thucydides (Books II., 2, 1; IV., 133, 1) in his history fixes certain dates not merely by the year of certain magistracies, but also by the year of the priesthood of Chrysis.

It would be unnecessary to glance at the religious systems of the other peoples—as the Egyptians, the Carthaginians, or those of Asia Minor—since from the general glance given at the place religion held in the private and public life of Rome and Greece, we may form a just idea of its place in relation to the public and private life of the peoples in other lands.

IV.

Now, of those countries that clustered around the Mediterranean and of the magnificence of whose civilization we have written in these general terms, there is scarcely one in which literature had not its devotees and which has not sent down to our time writings, in almost every department, worthy of a place among the immortals, or at least worthy of being studied or read. Of the orators of Greece, it is sufficient to give the names of the ten included in the Alexan-

drian Canon: Antiphon, Andocides, Isocrates, Isæus, Æschines, Lycurgus, Demosthenes, Hyperides and Dinarchus, with the addition of Pericles. What country in modern times has produced the superiors of these? How many countries have produced the equal of any of them? Of the philosophers, it is sufficient to give the names of Pythagoras, Thales, Epicurus, Zeno, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle. Their names are known to every student of philosophy, and much of the philosophy of modern times is either an appropriation or a modification of that of Socrates and Plato and Aristotle. What poets and dramatists of modern times surpass her Homer, her Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes? Almost the only names among English-speaking writers, at least, that may be placed in the same category, are Shakespeare and Milton. And do not her Herodotus, the Father of History, and her Thucydides stand in the front rank among the world's historians?

Although Rome cannot contend for the palm with Greece, yet she has handed down illustrious names that may stand side by side with hers,

In oratory, although she was inferior to Greece, whither her sons were sent to be trained in that science, she took no mean place; and the orations of her Cicero are read in all the universities of to-day.

The poems, histories and dramatic productions of Virgil, Horace, Juvenal, Livy, Cæsar, Tacitus, Plautus and Terence are on the shelves of all modern libraries that have any pretensions to completeness.

Indeed, there are in the systems of education of Germany, France, England, the United States and Canada, many principles, methods and courses of training that have their root in those of these ancient nations of which we have been speaking, and which may serve as illustrations of the Mediterranean world in the time of Christ.

V.

IN the world of which we are speaking, however, there existed institutions of the most degrading kind and a moral degradation that bears witness to such enervation of the moral

nature as appals one who has lived in the bracing atmosphere of a Christian land.

There was the institution of slavery, which was universal. The calculation made by Gibbon in the "*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*," puts the number of the slaves in the time of Claudius at 60,000,000, about equal to the number of free men in the empire. While this may not be strictly accurate, it is as likely to be too few as to be too many. Wilkins, in his essay on "*Education in Greece*," estimates that in Sparta and Athens there were three or four times as many slaves as free men. The name Phrygian was used as synonymous with slave. Pliny, in his "*Natural History*," mentions the fact that a certain freedman, that is, one who had himself been a slave, but had been manumitted, had, on his death, left 4,116 slaves; and many of the wealthy Roman nobles had far larger numbers on their estates. At one time it was suggested that all Roman slaves should be compelled to wear a certain uniform; but Seneca prevented the accomplishment of that purpose by showing how great would be the danger if

the slaves should, by that means, be made aware of their own numbers and the fewness of their owners. Cooper's "Justinian," p. 411, says: "Slaves were held *pro nullis, pro mortuis, pro quadrupedibus*; nay, were in a much worse state than any cattle whatsoever. They had no head in the State, no name, no title, no register. . . . They were not entitled to the rights and considerations of matrimony, and therefore had no relief in case of adultery. . . . They could be sold, transferred or pawned as goods or personal estate, for goods they were, and as such they were esteemed; they might be tortured for evidence, punished at the discretion of their lord, and even be put to death by his authority." Says Farrar, in his "Early Days of Christianity": "At the lowest extreme of the social scale were millions of slaves without family, without religion, without possessions, who had no recognized rights, and towards whom none had any recognized duties, passing normally from a childhood of degradation to a manhood of hardship, and an old age of unpitied neglect."

This vast multitude of slaves was accumulated in different ways. We have our bankrupt courts, by which a man may, in due process of law, be released from the obligation of his debts when he is no longer able to discharge them ; but when the Roman could not pay, he might be sold, his wife and children, and all that he had, and thus be reduced to the degraded condition of slavery. The great means, however, of recruiting the slave population was by war, which need not have any other justification than desire of conquest, or indeed of plunder, felt by the stronger power. Lucan, a Roman poet who lived in the reign of Nero, blames the people for their internal dissensions, and says, "Shame on you ! You turned your arms against each other when you might have been sacking Babylon." He does not give any reason for sacking Babylon ; but it is a reproach that they spent the energy that they might have employed in sacking that city in contending with each other. When, by the fortunes of war, a country or a city was at the mercy of a Roman conqueror, he drove off vast multitudes of its citizens to

the slave markets to be sold into slavery, or divided them up among the soldiers of his army. The war of Æmilius Paulus, in Macedonia, resulted in the sale of 150,000 people into slavery. When Lucullus triumphed in the East, so vast was the multitude of captives that they brought only about sixty cents of our money apiece. At the final destruction of Jerusalem 90,000 people were sold into slavery. The slave merchants followed in the wake of armies on expeditions that promised well, that they might buy up the captives and send them to the slave markets of Athens, Ephesus, Corinth, Rome or Delos. At some periods kidnapping supplied an important part of the slaves.

Now these slaves were considered as mere chattels, that could be disposed of at the will of their masters, who had power of life and death over them, and while, of course, many masters were kind and considerate in the treatment of their slaves, very many were guilty of the greatest possible cruelty. Sometimes when the owner was murdered, all his slaves were put to death, even to the number of hundreds. After

a slave revolt headed by Spartacus, about 73 B.C., which was after a long conflict put down, from 6,000 to 10,000 of the captured slaves were crucified on the Appian Way, one of the most public roads of Rome. So late as the time of Trajan—among the best of the emperors—no less than 10,000 slaves were driven into the arena, and compelled to slaughter each other. The awful tragedy continued for 123 days, during which the populace of Rome employed their leisure in sitting in the amphitheatre to witness the bloody scene.

Licentiousness was a necessary concomitant of this institution of slavery, and it rose into most appalling proportions. Indeed, so degraded was the world that prostitution had ceased to be a sin, so that Terence in the *Adelphi* makes Mincio say—

“Non est flagitium, mihi crede, adolescentulum
Scortari, neque potare.”

As if it were not enough to have absolved this crime from the guilt of sin, men had actually incorporated it into their religion, and in the

magnificent temple of Aphrodite in Corinth there were, as Renan tells us, no less than a thousand courtesans attached to the temple as priestesses and ministers of lust. Infanticide was common. It is referred to as a matter of course in Juvenal, Terence, Tacitus, Pliny and others of the ancient writers. When by reason of the size of the family the new arrival was not welcome, or when any other reason made it inexpedient that the child should live, the father did not take the new-born child in his arms, and it was thereupon exposed and allowed to perish, or someone took it and brought it up as a slave or for purposes of vice.

As one casts his eyes over that world bathed in the splendour of the civilization, the refinement and learning we have briefly described, and then considers the awful profounds of degradation and vice to which it had sunk, he no longer wonders at the picture drawn by Paul in the first chapter of Romans, or at that given by the Roman Seneca, who was contemporary with the apostle, which was scarce less appalling. Says Farrar, in his "Early Christianity," "The

epoch which witnessed the early growth of Christianity was an epoch of which the horror and the degradation have rarely been equalled, and perhaps never exceeded, in the annals of mankind."

VI.

IN this world thus pictured before us, and yet not of it, lay, in its south-easternmost corner, the country of Palestine—a land insignificant in size, without harbours for trade, without military prowess and destitute of any literature that had ever secured a place among the writings of the world's worthies. By turns she had been the prey of the Assyrians, the Persians, the Macedonians, the Syrians, the Romans. The area of the land was about two-thirds of that of Nova Scotia. Its population, although somewhat dense, was, in the aggregate, insignificant as compared with that of many surrounding nations, being between two and three millions. The inhabitants were an unsocial people, desiring no relations with others except in so far as was necessary for purposes of trade, in the pursuit

of which they penetrated into every town or village to which they could find admittance. They found their way in large numbers to Egypt; they went into the towns and villages in the mountain recesses of Asia Minor—Iconium, Derbe, Lystra; they crossed over to Europe to Philippi where, however, they were so few that they could afford a *Proseucha* only—a place where prayer was wont to be made—as the author of Acts says; they crowded to rich Corinth, and to Rome, from which they were banished by the Emperor Claudius, only to return, however, after the storm had passed by. Wherever they went they were separate from the rest of the population, usually by choice; but sometimes their neighbours found their presence so ungrateful that, by law, they were condemned to live in some section of the town set apart for their use, as in Rome, where they were placed on the western side of the Tiber.

In spite of themselves, they were involved in that Hellenising movement which was making itself felt in all parts of the world; but they

struggled long and fiercely against it. Said their teachers, a Jew who kept swine or taught his child Greek was accursed, and the gates of eternal life were shut to those who read the books of other nations. But with the exception of the Sacred Scriptures, their own books were so intolerably dull that it was scarcely necessary for them to put in the way of foreigners who might, for some reason or another, seek to acquire the Hebrew language, such obstacles as Jerome describes in some of his writings.

We look in vain for any philosopher among them, for any historian who concerns himself with the greater world round about him, or for any writer in any other department of literature who has written anything worthy of being read. They were intolerant in all matters pertaining to religion. Other nations would give a place in their temples to the gods of peoples around them; the Jew would not allow a worshipper of another god than Jehovah even to enter the sacred precincts of the temple, let alone have another divinity admitted to his

shrine. Wherever he was he made himself obnoxious by reason of the character, the frequency and the demonstrativeness of his religious rites and ceremonies.

VII.

Now, some time about four years prior to the Christian era, was born in the town of Bethlehem in this country of Palestine, Jesus the son of Mary, the wife of a carpenter named Joseph. The child was inhospitably received into the world, being born in a manger, because Joseph and Mary could not obtain lodging in the caravansary, as its accommodation had already been secured by others. Although Matthew tells of wise men coming from the far East to hail the birth of Jesus, He was little welcome to some, at least, of the people of Palestine, for it was not long before Joseph and Mary had to carry Him into Egypt to save Him from being slain by the king. When at length they returned, they made their home in Nazareth, where Jesus passed most of His early life, perhaps in the pursuit of the calling of Joseph, His reputed father,

and drinking in knowledge from home teaching in the Scriptures, or from the Synagogue services on the Sabbath, and on Mondays and Thursdays.

Of His boyhood we have one glimpse only. It was when He was twelve years of age. He was taken up to Jerusalem with His parents, who, as devout Jews, went to the Passover, taking Him with them, that the religious impressions of His home-life might be broadened and deepened by the solemn scenes and ceremonies of the feast. The narrative is given in the Gospel according to St. Luke, chapter ii., from verse 41 to 51. Eighteen years pass on before we get another glimpse of Him, and then we see Him, not in the temple or in the city, but in the wilderness of Judea, where John the Baptist is baptizing. It is after all the people had been baptized that He makes Himself known and is Himself baptized by the rough prophet of the wilderness. It is not many days after, when He opens His public ministry with the very same message as John had proclaimed (Matt. iv. 17). "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

In the course of the ministry which began with these words, He, with unvarying consistency, proclaimed that no man could be saved who refused to become His follower. A man might hold the most exalted position in the state, in society, or even in the Jewish Church; but if he refused to become a follower of Him, he could not be saved. On the other hand, the publicans, whom every Jew despised and hated; the harlots, whom all considered outcasts, and even the Gentiles or heathen should be welcomed with the tenderest possible welcome, and saved if only they should follow Him. Both the slur upon the goodness of those who were considered the better classes, implied in the condition exacted, and His willingness to accept the greatest outcast on the same condition, offended the better classes—the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Scribes, the Rabbis. Instead of moderating or varying His requirements in favour of these moral and religious people, He treated them even with greatest sternness, uttering against them most overwhelming denunciations.

The twenty-third chapter of Matthew, with

its fierce wrath, its reiterated "Woes;"—"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is become so, ye make him two-fold more a son of hell than yourselves."—"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness."—"Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgement of hell?" This whole chapter is made up of these denunciations, which, for fierceness and overwhelming wrath, cannot be equalled in any other literature ever written. On the other hand, nowhere can be found the equal of those tender stories in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, designed as they are to show the yearning love God feels toward the outcasts of society who come penitently to Him.

As to what Jesus said about Himself, He claimed the most amazing things. He declared that He had power on earth to forgive sins, that if men would believe on Him, they should never die; and with most obvious inconsistency, that

if they believed on Him, when they died He would raise them from the dead, and meeting them in the other world, He would protect them from all the power of divine wrath and conduct them to mansions He would prepare for them, that He and they might be together and be forever with God.

As we who have nineteen centuries of Christian history behind us, nineteen centuries of Christian thought and Christian training, read these things in cold print, they are robbed of much of the appalling tone they had to the Jews; but even to us the only thing that rescues them from being amazing blasphemy is their amazing truth. Having made such announcements about His person, it is not surprising that He claimed that He was lord even of divine institutions, for when certain Pharisees charged him with a violation of the Sabbath, He declared (Luke vi. 5) that He was lord of the Sabbath. Many of the teachings of the most revered Rabbis He swept away, as if they were dishonouring to God and pernicious. "Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye,

and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil; but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you. . . . For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?"

Not less did He expose Himself to the hatred of the leading men of the country by passing over the Scribes and Pharisees, who had always been the teachers of the people, and taking Peter, James and John—who had spent their earlier life in the rough and arduous calling of fishermen on the boisterous Sea of Galilee—and Matthew—one of the hated publicans—and sending them with eight others, whose avocations cannot be positively determined, throughout the land to proclaim His mission and teachings.

It is needless to prolong these words. But the end was what was to be expected. He died on the cross, deserted by almost all His disciples, and treated with the ignominy of contempt by

the Roman officials who were concerned in His death. What hanging is to us, that crucifixion was in those times to the Jew, the Greek, the Roman. It was against the law to put a Roman citizen to death by crucifixion. One of the most serious charges Cicero urges against Verres is that he had been guilty of the heinous crime of crucifying Roman citizens. What is surprising, however, in the case of Christ, is that there can scarcely be said to have been two parties on the question of His crucifixion. It is true, no doubt, that His disciples tried, in a feeble way, to secure His escape ; but what were they, compared to the great multitude of the community at large, that can scarcely be said to have been divided on the question at all ?

VIII.

THUS ended this extraordinary life and ministry. No ! it did not end thus : for, on the third day after His crucifixion, He rose from the dead. Even that extraordinary event, however, was discredited, at first by some of his own disciples and afterwards by many of the public

at large, so that twenty-five or thirty years afterwards, the story was still current that the disciples had come by night and stolen His body while the Roman soldiers who guarded the tomb were asleep.

Now such, in brief outline, is the story of the life, teaching, death and resurrection with which the Apostles were to go forth to conquer the world. But who were the men who were to go forth with this story to the mighty conquest? First, Peter, who belonged to the town of Bethsaida (House of Fish), a fishing town on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, a water that was amazingly prolific in fish of many varieties. The sea was a boisterous one upon which sudden squalls swept down, to the destruction of many a craft. To ply their calling upon its waters, the fishermen required strength and a rude vigour such as are possessed by the hardy fishermen on the shores of Nova Scotia. In summer-time they were not unaccustomed to prosecute their work in a state of nudity, as we may infer from the reference in John xxi. 7, where Peter himself is said to be naked; for while, no doubt,

a person was sometimes said to be naked (*γυμνός*) when his outside garments were removed, and so to speak, he was in his shirt sleeves, as Geikie gives us to understand in his "Life of Christ" (Vol. II., p. 614), it is quite probable that sometimes they toiled stript altogether of their clothing. At best, a fisherman's calling is not calculated to promote refinement and grace, does not promote intellectual attainments and elegant utterance of one's thoughts. Peter did not prove an exception in respect to these things. He was not converted till young manhood, at least, when his opportunities for education and training, if ever he had them, had gone. He had not, however, escaped the evil habits of fishermen, for when in after life, he is charged, on the occasion of Christ's trial, with being one of His followers, he denies with oaths and curses—words that do not rise to the lips unless they are familiar, or are the reassertion of habits of former times. As a compensation there had come to Peter a vigour and self-reliance that always stood him in good stead on occasions of difficulty; a loud and strong voice that he

could "lift up" and that could make itself heard anywhere, and a constitution that was a stranger to those ailments that too often harassed the Apostle Paul, and to which he refers more than once in tones of sorrow and pain. Then there were James and John, two fishermen brought up in the same town as Peter, in their early life fiery and hot-headed, so that even after they have become disciples of Jesus, He needs to rebuke them for desiring to have fire brought down from heaven to consume a Samaritan village that had refused hospitality to their Master. Sons of Thunder they are, who need the moderating hand of Jesus constantly near to restrain and to make them useful in His cause.

And there was Matthew also, a publican, who could scarcely be a very great source of strength to the Saviour's cause among a Jewish population. Indeed, he was not strictly a publican; but only one of the subordinates or *portitores* who were hated even more than the publicans, inasmuch as the subordinate can be more safely despised than the master. The proverb said, "Bears and lions might be the fiercest wild

beasts in the forest ; but publicans and informers were the worst in the city," and in this estimate the *portitores* were included among the publicans (*vide* Geikie, "Life of Christ," Vol. I., pp. 288, 289).

When we have named these we have mentioned all the original apostles, or even disciples, whose names are connected with any special work for Christ, so far, at least, as the Scripture record goes. Even after the resurrection and ascension, when the faith of the apostles had been restored by frequent intercourse with Jesus, it does not appear that there was any very general enthusiasm among the disciples at large, if we may judge from the fact referred to in the first chapter of Acts, where we have a record of a meeting of the disciples in the city of Jerusalem ; but the number of those present (if indeed it does not mean the number of disciples in Jerusalem) was only about one hundred and twenty.

IX.

Now these men and others, whose names are not given, preached in Jerusalem, and, on the day of Pentecost, no less than 3,000 persons were converted. Their ministry was continued in the city, and "the Lord added to them *day by day* those that were being saved." A little later Luke, the author of the Acts of the Apostles, says, "Believers were the more added to the Lord, *multitudes* both of men and women," and "the Word of God increased; and the number of the disciples *multiplied* *Jerusalem exceedingly*: and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." Meanwhile "there arose on that day a great persecution against the Church that was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, *except the apostles*." Among those compelled to flee before the fury of the storm was Philip, a disciple, who by the choice of his brethren, had been associated with six others, appointed to distribute the supplies of

the church to the widows, as we have it in the account in Acts vi. Under the promptings of the Holy Spirit, or, as some would have it, of his own motion, Philip began to preach the Gospel, assuming that he needed no other ordination than that which comes through the anointing of the Spirit. He went down to Samaria and preached the Gospel to the people of that city; and "the multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip." A little later, he was the means of converting the officer or chamberlain of Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians, who was returning to his home, by the desert road that led to Gaza; and, no doubt, the new convert carried the Gospel to his distant African home.

The wrath of man God made to praise him, and everywhere the very fury of the storm fanned the flame of Christian zeal. The very atmosphere seemed to be electric with the divine influence, so that converts were made without any apparent human intervention. In the Acts of the Apostles a remarkable illustration of this is given. There was a young Jew named Saul,

and also called Paul, born in the university town of Tarsus in Cilicia, of parents belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, who perhaps had somewhat recently removed from the town of Giscala, in Galilee. The father was possessed of the rights of Roman citizenship, which he transmitted to his son, so that he could boast of being a free-born Roman. The intensity of the Jewish spirit that pervaded his family may be seen from the fact that, although abundant facilities were provided for education in Tarsus, he was sent to receive his education in the school of Rabbi Gamaliel, in Jerusalem. Whether he had first used the opportunity of attending the university at home is a disputed point. But his Jewish zeal was heightened by training at Jerusalem; for although Gamaliel was a liberal-minded Rabbi, Saul could not help drinking in some, at least, of that intense Jewish spirit which was everywhere abroad, and that zeal for the House of the Lord, which was leading many to do, in the name of the Lord, things which were too wicked to be allowed by man. His experience at Jerusalem led him, no doubt, to share this

spirit, so that he was soon looked upon as one of the rising young men of the nation, and as was to be expected, took a share in persecuting the Christians. When Stephen was stoned, those who did the dreadful deed laid down their clothes at the feet of this young man Saul, who, to that extent of caring for the garments of the executioners, shared in the crime of murdering, under the form of law, the first Christian martyr. That whetted his desire for the blood of the Christians, and it was not very long before he applied to the authorities for letters to Damascus, a city of Syria, some 150 miles to the north-east of Jerusalem—authorizing him to break up the Christian Church in that city and to destroy the members. This was some four or five years after the crucifixion of Jesus; so that although the Saviour had never preached in that city, and we have no record of the apostles or other disciples having done so, yet a church had arisen there, that by its numbers, zeal and enthusiasm, attracted the hostility of the authorities of the Jewish Church a hundred and fifty miles away.

But Saul, who in his early life had some way

acquired the name of Paul, just as Thomas became Didymus, or Levi became Matthew, or Lebbæus became Thaddæus, was stricken down on the way by a wonderful manifestation of God's glory, and was converted to Christ. That conversion meant the conversion of many thousands during the next twenty-five or thirty years.

It would be tedious and unnecessary to our purpose to trace the progress of Christianity through the multitude of such instances as these, since they are recorded in Scripture ; but, in spite of opposition it was triumphant almost everywhere. Let it suffice to say that Peter went down to Cæsarea and preached the Gospel to Cornelius, and his household and many other persons were converted, so that afterwards, when in its turn the garrison was transferred to Rome, they became witnesses for Christ in the imperial city. In its triumphant march the Gospel reached Antioch in Syria, and cleansed the foulness of that magnificent city ; reached the Islands of the Sea ; reached the heart of Asia Minor, gaining victory in Iconium, in Antioch of Pisidia, in

Derbe, in Lystra, Colosse, Ephesus, Troas, Pontus, Cappadocia, Bithynia ; and crossing to Europe, triumphed in Philippi, gaining a victory more important to the future of the continent than that which Octavius gained nearly one hundred years before, over Brutus and Cassius ; triumphed in Thessalonica, in Berea, in Athens, in Corinth, in Rome ; so that, so soon as the time of Nero, only about thirty years after the death of Christ, according to Tacitus, the Roman historian, there was a "vast multitude" of Christians in the imperial city ; and the Epistles of Paul, Peter and the other New Testament writers, who refer to the matter, bear witness to the large numbers who were disciples of Christ in other parts of the world.

By the time of the Emperor Trajan, say, 100 A.D., the world was full of Christians. Pliny, the Governor of Bithynia and Pontus in Asia Minor, reporting to Trajan, declares that the heathen temples were almost deserted, that the sacred victims could scarcely find purchasers, that the Christian superstition had infected the cities and had also extended to the villages and

country districts generally. Justin Martyr, who wrote somewhere about 135 A.D., says in his "Dialogue with Typho," "There exists not a people, Greek or barbarian, or any other race of men, by whatever name or manners they may be distinguished, however ignorant of arts or agriculture, whether they dwell under tents or wander about in waggons, among whom prayers are not offered up in the name of the crucified Jesus, to the Father and Creator of all things." Tertullian, writing in the north of Africa sometime between 150 and 200 A.D., in his "Answer to the Jews," says: "For upon whom else have the universal nations believed, but upon the Christ who is already come? For on whom have the nations believed?—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and they who inhabit Mesopotamia, Armenia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, and they who dwell in Pontus and Asia, and Pamphylia, travellers in Egypt, and inhabitants of the region of Africa which is beyond Cyrene, Romans and sojourners, yes, and in Jerusalem, Jews and all other nations; as, for instance, by this time the varied races of the Gætulians and manifold con-

finest of the Moors, all the limits of the Spains, and the diverse nations of the Gauls, and the haunts of the Britons (inaccessible to the Romans, but subjugated to Christ), and of the Sarmatians, and Dacians, and Germans, and Scythians, and of many remote nations and of provinces and islands, many to us unknown, and which we can scarce enumerate? In all which places the name of the Christ who is already come reigns."

Now while such words as these written by a heathen governor in Asia Minor and by a Christian writer in the north of Africa, may both be exaggerated, we may, from their statements, taken in connection with the records in the New Testament, form some idea of the triumphant march of Christianity in the face of persecutions and opposition everywhere. The progress that was thus rapid continued till the whole Roman Empire was at the feet of Jesus Christ. There were times when this rapid progress aroused the hostility of the government, and persecution followed; but the onflow of the tide was scarcely checked at all.

At the close of the first century and beginning of the second, Trajan, one of the best emperors, a conservative ruler who seemed to think it his duty to maintain the established religion of the country, administered the Roman laws against Christianity, which was a *religio illicita* (an unlawful religion), in such a way as to cause in some parts of the empire, at least, the persecution of the Christians; but it can scarcely be said that he was a voluntary persecutor. His course is illustrated by the case of Bithynia in the northern parts of Asia Minor. Pliny, the younger, who was proprætor of the country, and to whom we have just referred, wrote Trajan asking to be directed as to his course in relation to the Christians. We sum up the correspondence in the words of Ramsay ("Church in Roman Empire"). Pliny asked:

1. Should any discrimination be made between different culprits on account of youth? In other words, are extenuating circumstances to be taken into account?
2. Should those who repent be pardoned?
3. What is the precise nature of the offence

which is to be investigated and punished? Is the mere name Christian, without any proof that serious moral offences have been committed, to be punished, or is it definite crimes conjoined with the name, that deserve punishment?

Trajan replies, not in form, but in fact, as follows:

1. Pliny's procedure has been correct, *i.e.*, his original assumption that the name of Christian, if persisted in, deserved death, was right.

2. No universal rule applicable to all cases can be laid down, *i.e.*, extenuating circumstances are to be considered according to the discretion of the governor.

3. Penitence deserves pardon, if shown in acts by compliance with rites of the Roman religion.

4. The governor is not to search for the Christians; but if they are formally accused by an avowed (not an anonymous) accuser, the penalty must be inflicted.

Of course, persecution carried on in that way, although bad enough, was not so fierce as sometimes it became, and as indeed it became in the next reign, that of Domitian, when without the

forms of law multitudes were sacrificed in many parts of the empire to the fury of the heathen populace.

In the reign of Decius, about 250 A.D., a most cruel and relentless persecution was undertaken, for the avowed purpose of exterminating Christianity from the empire.

An edict was issued requiring all Christians to appear before the magistrate in their own locality, and to abjure Christianity and to sacrifice to the gods of Rome. They were not to wait for some one to accuse them; but they must accuse themselves by going to the magistrate and acknowledging themselves to be Christians, and then they must forsake their religion and sacrifice to the gods whose altars they had forsaken. Many abandoned Christianity, some presented forged certificates to the effect that they had paid worship to the Roman deities; but a still larger number suffered death under different forms and with varied tortures "not accepting deliverance," nor "counting their lives dear unto them."

About fifty years afterwards Diocletian entered upon a persecution, if possible, more cruel and

relentless still. He issued edict after edict, each designed to intensify the persecution and to extend it more widely than its predecessor. As Smith says in his "Ecclesiastical History," "All Christian churches throughout the empire were to be destroyed and their property confiscated, and all copies of the Scriptures were to be given up to be burnt in public by the magistrates; all who practised Christian worship in private were doomed to death. Christians were deprived of their civil rights; freemen were shut out from all honours and public employments; slaves from the hope of manumission. Debarred even from the common benefit of the law, they were placed at the mercy of informers; for, while the magistrates were enjoined to hear all complaints against them, the Christians were forbidden to bring their complaints before the tribunals." Then, as if this were not enough, death was proclaimed as the penalty, so that, in the words of Eusebius, the swords were dull and the weary executioners had to relieve each other; and even the wild beasts at last being satiated with blood, refused to attack the Christians any longer.

The persecution exhausted itself at length, and in 311 the Emperor Galerius issued an edict of toleration, and in 313 the Emperor Constantine issued a second edict, not of toleration merely, but of preparation for the step that was soon taken—the recognition of Christianity as the legal religion of the empire, when “the Church ascends the throne of the Cæsars under the banner of the once despised, now triumphant cross.”

At length the victory had been gained and the Roman empire lay at the feet of Christ; for, although the old religions, rooted as they were in the institutions, the civilization, the business, the home and family life of the people, and in the vices of the city and the country alike, at intervals made efforts to regain their standing, they never succeeded in doing so.

Now it would not be fair to conclude that the victory was one in which spiritual religion and genuine Christianity alone were found triumphant—that the new religion had succeeded in making all the people true disciples of Christ, and that worldly influences did not prevail with

many; or that even Constantine himself was much more than a Christian in name. But it would be safe to say, what is sufficient for our purpose, that the percentage of genuine Christians—men with whom the spirit was more than the form, whose heart was imbued with vital godliness—was just as large as it would be in any general ingathering into the fold of Christianity in any mission-field to-day.

In the course of the struggle, many of the converts had shown the genuineness of their conversion by enduring, without a murmur, most cruel tortures, and even death, at the hands of heathen persecutors. Blandina, a female slave, who endured tortures and death with almost superhuman fortitude, and Pothinus, a bishop, who, at the age of ninety, was cruelly put to death, may serve to illustrate the spirit of the Christians in Gaul. Three young men—Revocatus, Saturninus and Secundulus—who, on the anniversary of the birthday of the Associate-Emperor Geta, were flung to the hungry lions and leopards in the amphitheatre; and Perpetua, a widow of only twenty-two years of age, and

Felicitas, a young female slave, both of whom were tossed in the arena on the horns of an infuriated cow, then despatched by the sword, may serve to illustrate the spirit of the Christians in the north of Africa. While Polycarp, of the Church in Smyrna, who, when arrested and commanded to curse Christ, replied, "Eighty and six years have I served Christ, and He has done me nothing but good, and how could I curse Him, my Lord and Saviour?" and was then led to the stake and burned, may illustrate the spirit of the Christians in Asia Minor. It would be easy to multiply names from the great army of martyrs, but sufficient has been urged to show that the faith and devotion of that time were at least equal to the average in the case of converts from among the heathen to-day.

The Christians of that age wrote works that still live; and, in spite of their fanciful interpretations of Scripture, their crude views on many of the theological teachings of Christianity, they are read by the Church of to-day. And when we remember that their authors had only recently stepped from the darkness of

heathenism into the light of Christianity, we cannot but wonder that they contain so much that is of value to the Christian Church after the lapse of so many Christian centuries. Up to the time of the Emperor Constantine, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, Papias, Justin Martyr, Tatian, Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Dionysius, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Novatian, Arnobius, Lactantius, and a host of others that we need not enumerate—men, some of whom had been rescued from the deepest profounds of heathenism—wrote treatises that have come down to our time—a fact that is no insignificant proof that, in those days, Christianity made conquests that might fairly rank with any of her victories of modern times.

All this was achieved without the assistance of wealth, either in the possession of those who went abroad preaching or in the treasury of any organization, such as the modern Missionary Society that stands behind the missionary of to-day; without the aid of civil or political power; indeed, in face of the opposition of the

governments of all countries, even in face of the hostility and contempt of all influential classes of the land from which the missionaries went. In one word, this most tremendous revolution which brought the world to the feet of Jesus Christ and gave the throne of almost universal empire to a Christian emperor was wrought by men who themselves had lost their distinct nationality, their capital city having been annihilated and their country reduced to the status of a mere subject province of the very empire they conquered for Christ.

As Dr. Schaff has said, "The most perfect doctrine and life were described by unschooled fishermen of Galilee, who never before had been outside of Palestine, and were scarcely able to read and write, and the profoundest mysteries of the kingdom of heaven—the incarnation, redemption, regeneration, resurrection—were taught by the apostles to poor and illiterate peasants, slaves and freedmen. For 'God chose the foolish things of the world, that He might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that He

58 *CHRISTIANITY'S GREAT TRIUMPH.*

might put to shame the things that are strong ;
and the base things of the world, and the things
that are despised, did God choose ; yea, and the
things that are not, that He might bring to
naught the things that are ; that no flesh should
glory before God."

PART II.

I.

IN the north-western corner of the Pacific Ocean lies the Empire of Japan, a name which is a corruption of Marco Polo's term Zipangu, which itself represents the Chinese word Shipen-kue, or land of the rising sun. The people of the country, however, call it Dai Nihon.

It consists of a vast number of islands—said to be about four thousand—some of which, however, are so insignificant as to be scarcely worthy of being considered at all, as they are little more than the mere summits of submarine volcanic mountains. Their total area is variously estimated from 130,000 to 155,000 square miles. There are four main islands that can be considered as constituting the empire, and they lie together in the form of an irregular crescent extending from Saghalien on the north, at latitude

45°, to about the 30th parallel south, which lies about 4° to the south of Corea, thus covering a distance of nearly 15° of latitude.

The northernmost of the islands, formerly called Yezo, but now known as "The Hak-kaido," or north country, used to be considered as uninhabitable for any except the aboriginal Ainos—a race of painted, hairy, uncivilized people, who spend most of their time out of doors. Recently, however, the Japanese government has been colonizing it and opening it up for further settlement. Next, to the south, lies Hondo, which formerly went under the name Nippon. It is by far the largest of the group, having an area of about 80,000 square miles, and being commonly spoken of as "The Mainland." Upon it are situated nearly all the chief towns of the empire, while almost all the foreign trade is done through its ports. To the south and east of Hondo lies Shikoku, or Four Provinces, so situated as to round out, in that part, the convex side of the crescent. Still farther to the south, but in a westerly direction, lies Kiu Shiu, the last of the group, and having an

area of about 15,000 square miles. The northern arm of the crescent approaches almost within sight of the Russian island of Saghalien, while the southern arm approaches so near to Corea that vessels may cross the strait between the two without losing sight of land. The whole country bears witness to its volcanic origin, being mountainous and rocky, so that it is doubtful if more than one-twelfth of the total area can ever be cultivated. A mountain ridge runs, like a backbone, from north to south of the crescent, interrupted only where the islands are separated from each other by the narrow straits cut through by the erosive power of the currents of the ocean. East and west from this central ridge, there run down to the coast mountain spurs that terminate in bold headlands, so that although here and there are a few plains, almost the entire country is broken by mountain ranges.

As we have said, the whole country is of volcanic origin, and, indeed, the process of formation does not yet seem complete; for, according to geological observations carried on during a

long series of years, some of the islands still appear to be rising farther out of the ocean, decade by decade. Eighteen volcanoes, still active, give constant indications of the activity of the geological forces at work within, while earthquakes are of almost daily occurrence in some part or other of the islands—indeed, no less than eighty-seven distinct shocks have been observed within twenty-four hours. Much damage and loss of life have sometimes resulted. So late as 1854, an earthquake occurred in Hondo that threw down hundreds of houses and destroyed the lives of several thousands of people.

The scenery of the country is very striking. In almost every direction the land is diversified by mountains, of which some assume proportions alpine in their grandeur and magnificence. The most noted, as well as most striking, peak in all Japan, is the volcanic cone of Fusiyama, as it is commonly called, which lies some seventy miles south-west of Tokyo, and attains an altitude of about 14,000 feet. It is capped with snow most of the year, while its craters and hollows retain the snow all the year round. Having many

weird associations gathering about it, it has been from time immemorial the seat of a shrine, to which many religious pilgrims resort. Hakusan, on the western side of Hondo, rises to the height of 9,000 feet, while a large number of other peaks of respectable altitude are to be found in different parts of the country.

The Inland Sea, as that part of the ocean is called, which is partly enclosed by the islands of Hondo, Shikoku and Kiu Shiu, adds much to the beauty of the scenery in that region of country, and in summer especially, presents a most charming appearance; while the narrowness of the islands and their irregular coast line bring a very large portion of the interior within sight of the ocean.

The people themselves claim that there is a large number of safe harbours, notwithstanding the fact that much of the coast is broken and bold; and no less than two hundred and ninety, large and small, are marked on the charts.

Vegetation is abundant and very luxuriant, owing to the great amount of moisture in the atmosphere, and flowers of many varieties grow

almost everywhere, the camellia growing to the height of forty feet. The mulberry, which provides in its leaves the food for the silkworm, is much cultivated, while the family of the conifers attains to great magnificence, and is perhaps represented by more varieties than in any other country in the world.

Japan has many cities of considerable size and several of very large proportions. Tokyo, formerly called Yedo, the capital of Japan, has about 800,000 people; Kioto, 567,000, and Ozaka, 531,000; while the most recent statistics put the population of the empire at about 40,000,000. Tokyo is a town of vast size. In former times, when means of information were not so accessible or so reliable as now, the city was supposed to be the London of the East. Oliphant, who was with Lord Elgin, when in 1858 he made a treaty with Japan, was so impressed with the size of the city that, writing in 1860 his narrative of the mission, he says, "The present population would, in all probability, be found to exceed 2,000,000"; while the Russian navigator Golovnin, who, in the early part of this

century was a prisoner in the city, makes the wild estimate of 8,000,000. For these extravagant estimates a justification, at least an excuse, may be found in the extent of the area covered by the city and suburbs, which is about sixty square miles, while the city proper, very densely populated as it is, covers about twenty-eight square miles.

II.

THE history of Japan is said to begin with Jimmu Tenno, who, if indeed he is a real and not a mythical personage, was the first emperor, being the fifth from Amaterasu, the heaven-illuminating goddess who was born into this world. Dr. J. J. Hoffman, the author of a Japanese grammar, published in Leyden, 1868, fixes the date of Jimmu's accession to the throne, as February 19, 660 B.C. It is not necessary, however, that we should accept with implicit confidence this date, fixing with such nice accuracy the time of an event so long ago. In point of fact, if we take the best authorities, we shall fix the beginning of the reliable history of

the country somewhere about the fifth century A.D.; although there is no doubt that so early as the close of the second century, the Empress Jingu Kogo, who ascended the throne of her husband, who died when in the field quelling an insurrection of his subjects, having put down the rebels, undertook an expedition against Corea. No other reason for the expedition was given than the desire to cause the arms of Japan "to shine beyond the seas"; no doubt, however, the real explanation is to be found in the wish of the shrewd empress to divert the minds of her subjects from their wrongs at home by an expedition abroad. The expedition was successfully accomplished without bloodshed, for the Coreans were ignorant not only that an enemy was at their doors, but even of the existence of people beyond the sea; so that when the Japanese forces came in sight the Coreans were paralyzed with mingled amazement and fear, and immediately submitted. The date of this invasion of Corea is put at 203 A.D.

On her return from the expedition, Jingu, a few months after her husband's death, was

delivered of a son, Ojin, who became a great warrior, and on his death in 313 was deified as God of War; and so late as 1874, when the Japanese undertook war against Formosa, many of the troops before embarking on the steamers visited the shrine of Ojin to supplicate his protection.

This was the first time the Japanese had ever been brought into contact with Asia, and the contact was fraught with far greater consequences to Japan than to Corea. From the date of the conquest in 203 A.D. to the latter part of the sixth century, there was, at intervals, an influx into Japan from Corea and China of skilled artizans of all kinds, scholars and teachers who brought with them the arts, letters, astronomy, medicine, the Chinese language, silkworms and the mulberry to supply them with food, and, the most important thing of all, the Buddhist religion, which modified and corrupted the ancient religion of the country. Shinto, by the foreigner commonly called Shintoism or Sintooism, the most ancient form of Japanese religion, is essentially the same as the pre-Confucian type

of Chinese religion, and in all probability came into Japan (before the dawn of her history) from the Asiatic mainland. It is without a code of morals or abstract doctrines, it has no developed doctrine of the soul's immortality, it has no idols or images of any kind; nor has it any representation of deity, its sole symbols being a mirror and the *gohei*, or strips of paper notched at the edges and suspended from the tops of wands of wood. One of its chief and most distinguishing characteristics is the deification of the emperors, scholars and heroes, and the worship of ancestors. In its early form it had no temples strictly so called; but on some hill-top or by some river-side or in some quiet forest grove, the priest, robed in white, assembled the people to render thanks to the gods for blessings and to make confession of sins. These acts of worship were followed by sacrifices of the products of the soil, of the chase, of the net. Later on a feast of purification was celebrated twice a year—in the sixth month and again in the twelfth—when the people assembled at the side of a river and, after prayers, performed

their ablutions, when they were pronounced pure from the sins of the past six months and sent to their homes with the favour of the gods resting upon them. At a later period temples were introduced, of the severest style of architecture, however, but no matter of what proportions or of how great importance the temple might be, its sole symbols of the divinity were the *gohei* and the mirror—the mirror being an imitation of that which was brought down from heaven by Amaterasu, at creation, the original itself being in the chief temple at Isé. In 1872, the Shinto shrines numbered 128,123. Shinto priests, although of different ranks, are known simply as shrine keepers. Strictly speaking they were government officials, although they can scarcely be said to hold that relation now; but in 1872 there were 76,119 of them. The *Kojiki*, that is, the Shinto Bible, compiled 712 A.D., is filled with narratives, many of them very fanciful, but it is destitute of any elements which we are accustomed to consider as pertaining to religion, containing neither precepts, morals, doctrines nor ritual. According to this

system of religion, Japan is the land of the gods, and the Mikado, who is descended from them, is their vicegerent on earth; hence he is looked upon with extreme reverence. Shinto was much modified and corrupted by Buddhism, which was introduced from China; but, at the close of last century, a revival of pure Shinto was begun, under a great reformer, Motsöri, who brought in again the native purity of that system. So late as 1872, the Japanese Department of Religion summed up the principles of it and promulgated them through the empire as follows: "(1) Thou shalt honor the gods, and love thy country. (2) Thou shalt clearly understand the principles of heaven and the duty of man. (3) Thou shalt revere the Mikado as thy sovereign, and obey the will of his court."

A minute analysis of Shinto reveals the fact that, in reality, it is not properly a religion at all; but, as William E. Griffis wrote in the *New York Independent* in 1871, it is, "in its higher forms, simply a cultured and intellectual atheism. In its lower forms, it is blind obedience to governmental and priestly dictates." Or, as

Rev. Dr. Brown says, "It is in no proper sense of the term a religion. It has rather the look of an original Japanese invention." So that as Griffis says, in his "The Mikado's Empire," "Swarms of petty deities, who have human passions, and are but apotheosized historical heroes, fill the pantheon of Shinto. The end and aim of even its most sincere adherents and teachers is political. Strike out the dogma of the divinity of the Mikado and the duty of all Japanese to obey him implicitly, and almost nothing is left of modern Shinto."

III.

THE other great religious system that may be said to divide with Shinto the allegiance of the people was Buddhism, which, as we have already said, first came over from China, in the sixth century, although many contend that it was brought over about the close of the third, when one Wani, a Korean scholar, came to Japan and resided at the court of the Mikado for the purpose of instructing his son in Asiatic learning. The probabilities are against the earlier date,

74 *CHRISTIANITY'S GREAT TRIUMPH*

however. In all essential particulars, the Buddhism of Japan is the same as that which, in India, China, Burmah and elsewhere, includes adherents numbering in all probability about 400,000,000. It has a lofty philosophy, and a code of morals inferior to that alone of the religion of Christ. The transmigration of souls, or metempsychosis, and the entire equality of all men as to sinfulness and misery and as to the possibility of being delivered from both through knowledge, are fundamental precepts. According to its teachings, all souls have lived for endless ages in previous states, for sins committed in which, the miseries of this world are the punishments. And when the soul leaves this world it must pass through other states or stages of life, superior or inferior, until, in the course of ages, it shall be absorbed in Buddha and its conscious existence be lost forever. In its early purity, its morals differed little, if any, from those of Christianity. They are summed up as follows in "The Mikado's Empire": "Besides the cardinal prohibitions against murder, stealing, adultery, lying, drunkenness, and un-

chastity, every shade of vice, hypocrisy, anger, pride, suspicion, greediness, gossiping, cruelty to animals, is guarded against by special precepts. Among the virtues recommended, we find not only reverence of parents, care of children, submission to authority, gratitude, moderation in time of prosperity, submission in time of trial, equanimity at all times, but virtues such as the duty of forgiving insults, and not rewarding evil with evil." It is not necessary to say how far the devotees of Buddhism fell short of its moral exactions.

When it arrived in Japan, it had already seen twelve centuries of its history, during which time it had elaborated an ecclesiastical system of most imposing proportions. It had its priests, its monastic system, its systematized theology, in which were included sensuous heavens, hells with materialized punishments, an elaborated eschatology, a hagiology of duly graded saints, and masses to be procured by purchase; so that it has been said to be Roman Catholicism without Christ and in an Asiatic dress. To many of the Japanese Buddhism was peculiarly attractive.

It presented a positive system of morals, a lofty philosophy, and an ecclesiastical system of striking and splendid proportions. Among the learned and higher classes, it made rapid headway; but its almost universal triumph was not brought about till well on in the eleventh or twelfth century, and then only by incorporating within itself much of Shinto; so that the deified heroes and local deities of the latter are all included in the pantheon of Buddhism as incarnations of Buddha.

In the course of the centuries, Buddhism itself was divided into different sects characterized by peculiarities of various kinds, but all adhering to the essentials of Buddhism. The chief of these sects are the following: Tendai, Shingon, Zen, Jodo, Shin, Nichiren, Ji, having among them, according to the census of 1872, 98,914 temples, 75,925 priests, 9,621 nuns, 37,327 student novices, or about a total of all classes of *religieux*, some of which are not classified in this list, of 211,846. Many of the temples and religious houses of the Buddhists are of striking proportions and magnificence. So triumphant had been the progress

of Buddhism that, in the sixteenth century, it aroused the bitter hostility of the Shintoists, so that one of the descendants of the priestly family established by Ota Chi'kazané, a prince with little respect, however, for religion, Nobunaga by name, undertook the extermination of the whole system from the country. He assembled his warriors and marched against the strongholds of the Buddhists, for such many of their religious establishments were. Of their vast size and fortress-like character we may form an idea from a description of one of them destroyed by Nobunaga, in 1571. It was situated at Hiyeizan, on Lake Biwa, and was, perhaps, more extensive than any other in the empire. "The grounds, adorned and beautified with the rarest art of the native landscape gardener, inclosed thirteen valleys and over five hundred temples, shrines and priestly dwellings. Here thousands of monks were congregated. They chanted before gorgeous altars, celebrated their splendid ritual, revelled in luxury and licentiousness, drank their saké, eat the forbidden viands, and dallied with their concubines, or hatched

plots to light or fan the flames of feudal war, so as to make the quarrels of the clans and chiefs redound to their aggrandizement. They trusted profoundly to their professedly sacred character to shield them from all danger." Having sat down before this monastery, Nobunaga ordered it to be set on fire, and amidst the great conflagration the most dreadful scenes of slaughter took place. The priests and their families—children, concubines, and aged monks—were slaughtered without mercy, and the whole establishment utterly destroyed. The persecution swept through the land, so that Buddhism was almost annihilated, and even to this day, it can scarcely be said to have recovered from the blow. Such, in brief outline, are the systems of religion which have claimed the devotion of Japan.

IV.

WHAT intercourse Japan had with the mainland of Asia, or with the large islands that lay to the south of her, it is impossible to tell ; but the Portuguese may, perhaps, claim the honour

of having been first among Europeans to land upon her shores. About the middle of the sixteenth century, one Mendez Pinto, a Portuguese sailor, with two companions of the same nationality, having been almost wrecked off the shore of Kiu Shiu, succeeded in landing there. They introduced into the country a knowledge of the manufacture and use of gunpowder and fire-arms; and so won upon the people by their skill and by their knowledge of the outer world, that they were allowed to carry a rich cargo from the country and to open up a trade between their countrymen settled in China and the Japanese. Pinto carried to his friends such wonderful stories of Japan, that not only did they open up a prosperous trade, but also reported to their countrymen in Portugal their great prosperity and success. Europe heard with amazement the wonderful stories of the wealth of Japan, and in 1598, the Dutch East India Company despatched thither five merchant vessels, of which, however, one only reached its destination, taking two years for the voyage. The Dutch were welcomed and were given facilities for

carrying on trade, a port on the island of Hirado, which lies off the south-east of Kiu Shiu, being conceded to them. In 1637-1639 the Portuguese incurred the dislike of the Japanese, who, in the latter year, expelled them from the country and transferred to the Dutch Deshima, the seat of the Portuguese trade, a town near Nagasaki, where for two hundred years the Dutch continued to enjoy a monopoly of the European trade with the empire.

In 1611, James I. of England sent one Captain Saris, with three ships, to open up trade; but although he was well received at first, yet, owing to a quarrel with the Dutch, he was compelled to abandon his undertaking and England never succeeded in really opening up commerce with the country till, in 1858, the Earl of Elgin, on behalf of the Queen, negotiated a treaty of friendship and commerce. In the year 1854, Commodore Perry, of the United States Navy, succeeded in negotiating a treaty on behalf of his government. And by 1874, Japan had treaties of commerce with Great Britain, United States of America, Holland,

Russia, Prussia, Portugal, France, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Greece, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, Hawaii, Peru, China, thus practically being open to the world.

So soon as Japan became known to the outer world, and the stories of the fabulous wealth of the people and their mild, generous and civilized character were reported in Europe, the Christian Church began to lay its plans for conquering the country for Christ. Loyola had then just organized the Society of Jesus, and Xavier, his associate in the undertaking, resolved upon effecting that object. Accordingly, in 1549, Xavier, accompanied by another member of the order of the Jesuits and two Japanese who had been converted in India, landed at Kagoshima, in Kiu Shiu, the southernmost portion of the empire. It is not necessary to describe either the methods employed by Xavier or the stages of his progress; or to criticise the character of the converts, the type of Christianity he introduced, or the teachings he imparted to those who embraced the Christian faith. But within thirty-five years he succeeded in establishing no less than

two hundred churches with a membership of something like 150,000. In 1583 the Daimios of Kiu Shiu sent eight young Christian noblemen to Rome to visit the Pope, and after an absence of eight years they returned home, taking with them seventeen Jesuit missionaries, which, with those that had in the meantime found their way to Japan, constituted no insignificant body of workers. At that time the whole country seemed ready to turn to Christ. It was not long, however, before a change came in the policy of the government and in the disposition of the people towards the new religion, and in 1590 the missionaries were all banished from the country, while the most stringent measures were taken to annihilate Christianity.

To show the wonderful progress of the work of the missionaries, however, the Japanese themselves declared that there were no less than 2,000,000 Christians in the empire at that time. No doubt these figures are very much exaggerated; but the Jesuits themselves put the numbers at 600,000, which is probably not in excess of the truth.

It is not necessary for our purpose that we should pursue the story of these early attempts to Christianize the country: but we may add that all the efforts of the government, which, at intervals pursued a course of relentless persecution, proved unavailing to stamp out Christianity; for, so late as 1860, when Roman Catholic missionaries again landed, they found in Nagasaki and neighbouring districts, at least 10,000 Christians who still stood firm in their attachment to the faith of their fathers who were converted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

V.

WE have not touched the great institution of feudalism which extended throughout the empire; nor that political movement by which the Emperor had been robbed of his power and relegated to the privacy of his palace, to be nothing more than a name in the government, while the general of his forces, under the title Shōgun, had usurped all the real power; nor the great struggles to overthrow Buddhism and to restore

Shinto; nor any other of the great social and political movements which might very properly find a place in even a sketch of the country's history. All this lies outside our purpose. But it is necessary that we should say, that, during all the years over which we have passed with such a light touch, there was social and political ferment which, in 1868, culminated in a *coup d'état*.

The most influential and public-spirited of the population had long cherished the desire to overthrow the Shōgunate with all its attendant evils, and to restore the Mikado to his ancient and lawful rule as it existed prior to A.D. 1200. In 1868, January 3rd, troops gathered by this party, suddenly seized the gates of the Mikado's palace, in Kioto, and under their leaders proceeded to effect a revolution in affairs. The old officials were dismissed, and their places were filled with men friendly to the new ideas: while the whole machinery of the government was seized and held by the revolutionary party. Of course, the old was not overthrown without a struggle, in which fire and sword did their usual work in

destruction of life and property ; but the struggle was not a long one, for by July of the following year the revolution was complete, and the country was in the enjoyment of universal peace.

Although it is doubtful if the design of the reformers included any purpose of bringing into the country western ideas, civilization and learning, yet it is beyond question that the revolution did, in fact, prepare the way for them all, in a very striking manner. Just so soon as the work was completed, the Mikado removed his residence from Kioto, first to Osaka, and afterwards to Yedo, or Tokio, as it is now called, *i.e.*, eastern capital, as the word means.

He not only removed the seat of government from its former out-of-the-way locality to the business centre of the empire, but he himself came forth from the privacy in which all his ancestors for seven centuries had dwelt, and took a part in the public work of government : his first step being to meet a council of the nobles and Daimios, and to take before them the following oath : "A deliberative assembly should be

formed ; all measures be decided by public opinion ; the uncivilized customs of former times should be broken through ; *and the impartiality and justice displayed in the workings of nature* be adopted as a basis of action ; and that intellect and learning should be sought for throughout the world, in order to establish the foundations of the empire."

Although, during the course of the revolution, much bitterness and bloodshed had been caused and considerable fanaticism had been aroused, yet when the change had been effected, the party that had triumphed was marked by the greatest possible moderation in the hour of victory. Of the leaders on the other side, bitterly as they had fought against the revolution, not one was put to death ; but by the clemency of the Emperor they were all pardoned. Most of them, if not all, were permitted to share on equal terms with the victors in political preferment and in the enjoyment of public office ; while all the defeated Daimios were restored to rank and income. Thus, in a brief period of less than two years, there was effected such a

complete revolution, as can be paralleled in the history of few peoples,—a revolution that was effected, and that too in a heathen country, without any of those injustices, excesses and subsequent cruelties that, even in Christian countries, have come to be looked upon as almost necessary concomitants of all great political changes effected by arms.

Immediately the nation entered upon the path of modern civilization and development. Newspapers sprang up, books were published, translations of western works were issued from the presses in large numbers and sown broadcast throughout the country, western science began to be cultivated, while many young men who had been sent to Europe and America to study and to observe the civilization of the people there returned, and in their writings drew faithful representations of the lands they had seen, their usages, their commerce and their government.

At the close of hostilities, in 1870, there still remained one work of great importance to be effected. About eight centuries prior to the

time of which we are speaking, there had been established a system of feudalism by which the country had been divided up between a certain number of Daimios, or feudal chiefs, who held their possessions as private and personal property, the people dwelling on it being practically serfs of the Daimios; but so steadfast was the nation to the new ideas that were brought in by the revolution, that, with scarcely any friction at all, the whole feudal system was overthrown and abolished forever. In the month of September, 1871, all the Daimios were summoned to Tokio to surrender their fiefs to the Emperor and to be retired to private life. The whole number of them presented themselves before the Emperor, and submitted to his will in the matter; or, if any failed to present themselves, they were of so little importance that they could be safely disregarded. The Japanese may be pardoned for the spirit which leads them to delight in referring to this occasion as illustrating, in a most striking manner, the public spirit of the Daimios, who consented to surrender to the Emperor dignity, power, pro-

perty, income, when it became necessary to do so in the interest of the country.

The revolution was complete, but the effort to re-establish Shinto had most completely failed. Buddhism still continued the national religion, although with a much weakened hold on the people, and in 1874 it was formally dis-established.

From 1872 only, may be dated the free public and official intercourse of Japan with the outside world, but she entered upon it with a vigour that gave great promise for her own advancement. For the first time, in her modern history at least, she welcomed western knowledge, western civilization, western religion.

The Christian churches were not slow to see their opportunity, and immediately proceeded to establish missions in the country, being welcomed with an enthusiasm which promised great things for the future. In the year above named the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States established a mission. In the year 1873 the Methodist Church of Canada organized one. Two years later the American

Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions had entered the field, while, so early as 1859, the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, and the Reformed Church of America, had both sent well-organized missions to the country. On March 10th, 1872, the first Japanese Christian church of modern times was organized; native pastors were rapidly introduced into the work, and Christianity seemed to be about to sweep everything before it. Supplementing their distinctively religious work by that of education, the Christian churches established schools, in which they provided instruction for the youth of each sex in all the branches of a modern Christian education. They authorized their missionaries to assume the office of instructors in the higher schools and universities of the empire, and used the printing-press to disseminate among the people a knowledge of western learning pervaded with a strong Christian influence. In the earnest purpose of gaining the people for Christ and His Church, the missionary committees of the different denominations established medical missions, in con-

nection with which hospitals were opened for the gratuitous treatment of the sick and diseased, especially among the poor, by Christian physicians, whose chief aim was to find the means of curing the souls of the people while ministering to their diseased bodies. It was not long before Christianity seemed about to capture the country. Christian newspapers were established, and even the native publications spoke in the most friendly terms of Christianity. All the missionaries seemed intoxicated with the enthusiasm of the times, and sent home most sanguine reports of their prospects for winning multitudes for Christ and His Church. At the same time, as the Japanese were, to all appearances, being swayed by the strong Christian influence that seemed to be welcomed with enthusiasm as that for which the great national revolution had been preparing the way, the nation was studying with intense earnestness the civilization, the arts, the manufactures, and the constitutions and governments of the western nations. Many young men were sent over to the United States, to

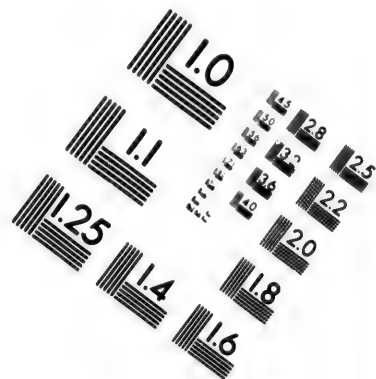
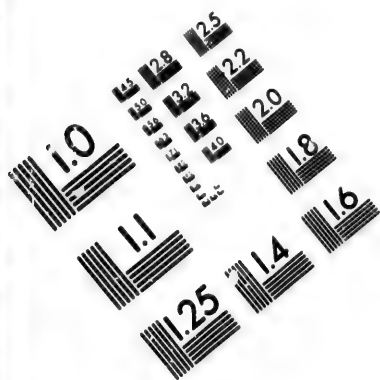
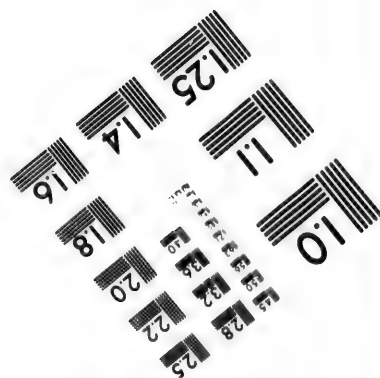
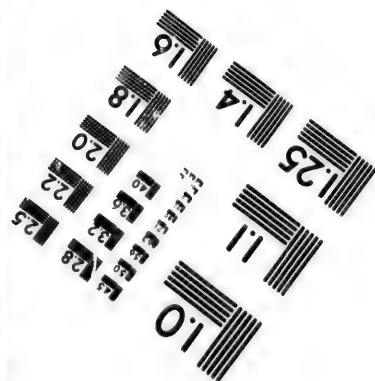
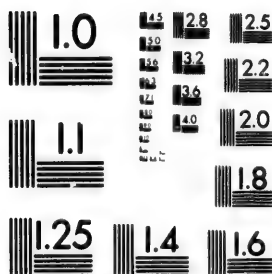


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England, to Germany and France, to study at the universities of those countries, and to acquire a knowledge of their political institutions.

All this shows that while the leaven of Christianity was no doubt working in a most wonderful manner, the leaven of new political life was working also; and in 1875, the Emperor seeing that the establishment of some form of constitutional government was inevitable, began to prepare the way for it by establishing a senate and forming local councils or assemblies everywhere throughout the country. Although comparatively little benefit resulted directly to the country from these councils, yet they served a good purpose in preparing the people for maintaining representative institutions when in due time they were established. Some five or six years afterwards, in October, 1881, the Emperor took the final step precedent to establishing representative institutions, when he issued the following proclamation: "We have long had it in view to gradually establish a constitutional government. . . . It was with this object in view that in the eighth year

of Meiji (1875) we established the Senate, and in the eleventh year of Meiji (1878) authorized the formation of local assemblies. . . . We, therefore, hereby declare that we shall, in the twenty-third year of Meiji (1890), establish a parliament in order to carry into full effect the determination we have announced, and we charge our faithful subjects bearing our commissions to make, in the meantime, all necessary preparations to that end."

The five years that elapsed before the period named in the proclamation were years of wonderful progress in all departments of commercial, economic and political development. Railways, telegraph lines, tramways, telephone lines and factories were established everywhere. Military and naval establishments were organized on most approved modern scientific principles. Civil and criminal codes of procedure in the courts were elaborated, being based on the soundest principles of modern jurisprudence. Commerce with the outside world, especially with Europe, the United States and Canada, was encouraged and grew to striking propor-

tions in a comparatively short time. Thus, when the date fixed for the promulgation of the new constitution arrived, the country was in a measure prepared for it, and had already anticipated some of the results it was designed to effect.

Under the new constitution there are two Houses of Parliament—the House of Peers and the House of Representatives. The House of Peers is composed of the princes of the blood and other hereditary nobles who sit in their own right; of certain persons nominated by the Emperor for meritorious services or for learning, and of representatives sitting for a term of seven years. The Lower House, or House of Representatives, is elected by the people, and sits for four years.

The experiment has now been tried for about ten years, and although it has not been without friction and sometimes not without signs of danger to its continuance, yet, when we look at the results, we cannot fail to admire the success achieved. Under the new constitution the country has triumphantly passed through a war with its vast neighbour, China, and has made

itself feared by other nations whose interests lie in different parts of the Pacific Ocean. And, at the present, when the signs of the times seem to indicate a conflict of interests between China, Russia, France, Germany and England and the United States, that may issue in war, by a kind of tacit consent it is taken for granted that Japan will stand shoulder to shoulder with England and the United States in the contest, if it should come—indeed, that a secret treaty to that effect already exists. If that condition of affairs should arise, there will be seen for the first time in history, two of the most highly Christianized nations in alliance with a heathen country, in a war whose other antagonists will all be Christian. In any case, however, Japan must be enumerated among the great powers of the world, and beyond question she will play an important part in the task of deciding the future of much of Asia, at least, even if, at some time or other, she should not have to be counted with in making the destiny of Europe itself.

VI.

AND thus at this very moment what do we see? For the first time in the history of the world, we see a nation, highly civilized, with European civilization, with large cities lighted by electricity, and having hospitals for the sick and institutions for the orphan and the maimed members of society; with an elaborate school system, from the common school up to the university, whose professors stand side by side with the learned men of any other country in the world; with learned societies, whose scientific observations in seismology, in medicine, geology, bacteriology are accepted everywhere; with railways, steamships, telegraph lines and a post-office system not surpassed anywhere; with an army and a navy which not only showed its prowess in the recent war with China, but which has already put the nation among the great powers of the world; with manufactures that are reaching gigantic proportions; with a vast commerce with all the civilized nations of

the world ; with ambassadors, or other representatives, at the capitals of all the important countries in Europe, Asia and America ; with a system of jurisprudence and legal machinery of the best type ; with presses pouring forth millions of newspapers, books and magazines ; and, above all, with responsible government carried on by an Emperor with a House of Lords and House of Representatives modelled after the systems in Great Britain, Germany and the United States ;—we say, at the dawn of the twentieth century of Christian history, we see for the first time a nation possessed of all these things which have their roots in Christianity and are its legitimate fruit, practically rejecting Christianity itself. For when the Emperor opened Parliament and the constitution was given to the country, its preamble began by ascribing the Emperor's imperial position to the influence of his "ancestors":—"Having, by virtue of the glories of our ancestors, ascended the throne of a lineal succession unbroken for ages eternal." The first article declares "The empire of Japan shall be reigned over and gov-

erned by a line of emperors unbroken for ages eternal." And the imperial oath, taken when the constitution was promulgated, declared "That we have been so fortunate in our reign . . . as to accomplish this work, we owe to the *glorious spirits of the imperial founder of our House and of our other imperial ancestors*." It seems almost grotesque to have the ruler of the country, as he is about to put the crown upon the civilization which Christianity has furnished him, by giving to the people a constitution and parliamentary government such as Christianity has made possible and of which it has provided the very roots, to stand forth, so to speak, not only before his own people but, as it were, before the world, to ascribe it all, according to the teachings of his heathen Shintoism, to the benign and potent influence of the *spirits of his ancestors*. Is there a parallel to it in the history of the world?

It may, perhaps, be urged that the Japanese have not rejected Christianity, and that it is too early to reach any conclusions on that point. But that they have made their choice is evident.

Christianity and western civilization were held up before them, not that the missionaries and the Christian churches consciously offered them the choice, but that only makes the case the more serious. They listened to the preaching of Christianity, and had its Bibles and all its appliances for enforcing its claims, and then quietly passed it by and accepted the civilization of the west, which had never urged its claims and which was not a matter with which the missionaries were concerned at all.

We do not say no results have been produced that were well worthy the expenditure and the toil; but we do say that, by some means and for some reason or other, matters have been so presented to the Japanese mind that western civilization has appeared to them the great thing and Christianity almost nothing at all.

What are the results so far as Christianity is concerned? There were in Japan, in the year 1896 (these are the most recent statistics at hand and will not vary much from those of this present year), *thirty-seven* different societies and denominations at work in the empire, ex-

clusive of the Roman Catholic Church, but including the Greek Church. There were 479 churches, with a membership of 61,514. The number of adherents of the Roman Catholic Church was 52,177. Probably 125,000 would cover the whole number of nominal Christians in the empire at this present time. This means that on the average there is in Japan one nominal Christian for every 350 heathen. That the present condition of the Christian churches in Japan is satisfactory cannot be affirmed, for there seems to be much unrest among them. It is two or three years only since the Congregational Church of the United States felt called upon to send a deputation to visit its missions there, and to deal with some very difficult questions—questions of which some still remain unsettled. And on the return of the deputation one of its members wrote in the *New York Outlook*, under date of November 14th, 1896, as follows: "The difficulties of the situation in Japan are already well known. There is no violence there, but many of the Japanese feel that the time is already at hand when mission-

aries will be no longer needed, and there is not the slightest doubt that their influence for the time at least has greatly waned." Only this summer the Methodist Church here in Canada sent its General Superintendent to visit its missions among the Japanese, for the purpose of investigating, on the ground, certain matters that have for some time caused friction, that during the General Conference of 1894 were discussed at great length, and that even still continue to give anxiety to those charged with the responsibility of managing the work in the foreign field. Not only do these things indicate this unrest referred to above, but the decline in membership of some, if not all, of the Japanese churches, points in the same direction.

In all this, how little do we see of the triumphal tread of the Christian march of the first centuries. Then almost everything combined with the power of Satan to prevent the triumph of Christianity. Now all things seem to join to make straight a highway for our God. In Japan everything seemed to invite the missionary; in the Mediterranean world all things

seemed to conspire to resist and oppose him. In the ancient days the preachers of Christianity were persons who, in their own country, might be called "unlearned and ignorant," and how much more in foreign lands to which they went; for although, in later years, some to whom that term could not justly be applied became preachers of Christianity, yet there never was a time before Constantine when it would not have been largely true. In Japan, however, the preachers of Christianity have been able, educated and well-taught men, many of whom have been graduates of British, German or American universities. In the former case, they went out to preach, trusting to what the people might be disposed to contribute for their support or to the precarious liberality of Christian churches, whose members were ill able to afford them help; so that sometimes they needed to spend in manual labour, to earn their bread, the precious time that they should have been free to devote to preaching. In the latter case, they have been supported generously by powerful missionary societies or other organiza-

tions, so as to be free from perplexities of worldly care in order to give their whole time to their work. In the former case, the original preachers came from an obscure country that had lost its distinct nationality, whose capital with its temple had been utterly annihilated. In the latter, they belonged to the greatest nations in the world—Great Britain, Germany, and the United States. In the former case, they could be burned alive, could be thrown to the lions in the amphitheatre, could be butchered to make a Roman holiday, and no voice would be raised in their defence. In the latter, let them suffer injustice, not to say death or destruction of property, and the power of the country to which they belong would be used in their behalf; and let reparation be denied, and the fleet and armies of their nation would be moved to avenge their wrongs. In the former case, their religion was proscribed in the empire that they sought to lead to Christ, and was hated and despised by the majority of the people of Palestine, where it had originated. In the latter case, it was the religion of the nations from which

the missionaries came, and was welcomed with enthusiasm and gladness, so that Japan seemed already at the feet of Christ.

Is the battle lost because there has been a repulse? Christ's armies have oftentimes been driven back, but the promise stands sure. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgement in the earth; and the isles shall wait for His law." "The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." And the triumphant shout shall be raised, even in Japan, "Hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!" But if that triumph is to be seen in our day—in our children's day—in our children's children's day—is to be seen by those who shall greet the dawn of the twenty-first century, there must be a change of the policy of the Christian Church which, under the spur of denominational rivalry, is duplicating and reduplicating several times over its agencies at home, and making this very extravagance an excuse for a neglect of the starving millions of heathen abroad, which excuses itself for sending to Japan a score or so

of missionaries, when there is ample field for hundreds and urgent need of them if the empire is to be won for God: and need of the re-discovery of that secret power by virtue of the possession of which the early apostolic missionaries could say, "thanks be to God that always causeth us to triumph."

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FINIS.